Fiscal Deficit

155. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of fiscal deficits in the Central Budget during the last three years;

(b) the details of actual plan expenditure during this period; and

(c) what necessary action has been taken by Government to achieve the objectives of the Budget?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) The details of Fiscal deficit and Plan expenditure of the Central Government are as under:

Year	Plan expenditure (Rs. crore)	Fiscal deficit
2002-03	1,11,470	1,45,072
2003-04	1,22,280	1,23,272
2004-05 (P)	1,32,160	1,27,975

P- Provisional actual as per Controller General of Accounts, Ministry of

Finance. Source: Central Budget documents

(c) Fiscal consolidation has been high on the reform priorities of the Government. Initiatives taken in the recent past include pre-payment of high cost external debt, buyback of high cost domestic debt, introduction of contributory pension scheme for new entrants to Government service, widening the tax base and phased withdrawal of tax exemptions. The Government is committed to the objectivies and targets of the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2003.